Light Combat Aircraft, 5.56mm Indian Small Arms System (INSAS), Pilotless Target Aircaft are denovo technology development projects. Delays in such developmental projects are inherent. No project, however, has been stymied due to the delays. After successful completion of indigenous development, MBT Arjun, 5.56mm Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) and Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA) have already entered production phase. The Light Combat Aircraft and Advance Light Helicopter projects are progressing satisfactorily. Project Sea Bird is a construction project and is scheduled to be completed in 2005 AD. It will not be in public interest to divulge more information on individual projects.

Extension of canteen facility to retired civilian employees

39. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Defence is aware that while other Ministries like Communications and Railways are extending benefits to their retired employees in the shape of allotment of PCOs/ ISD/STD on out-of-turn basis and giving free railway travelling passes etc., no such facility is extended by his Ministry to its retired civilain employees to use the canteen facilities; and

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to extend this facility to the reitired civilian employees in Delhi in this Golden Jubilee year of Independence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) The Canteen Stores Department has been set up primarily for the benefit of Defence Service Personnel and the extension of a portion of this facility to certain categories of Defence Civilian Personnel is incidental. As the conditions of servic. of such civilian personnel are quite distinct from those of Defence Service Personnel, further extension of this benefit to retired personnel is not considered necessary. Nor can it be justified in the light of tax concessions and the additional infrastructural expenditure involved. As such presently there is no proposal to extend these facilities to the retired Civilian Defence employees in Delhi in this Golden Jubilee Year of Independence.

Agreement for purchase of aircrafts

40. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed any agreement with any country for purchase of sophisticated aircrafts during the last two years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the names of the country and the terms and condition of agreement signed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of India have signed an agreement with Russia for procurement of 40 SU-30MK aircraft in a phased manner, over a period of five years. The contract provides for outright purchase of the aircraft with sophisticated equipment and armaments, followed by transfer of technology and licenced manufacture of the aircraft in India by HAL, for subse quent supplies.

India-Poland tank upgrade project

41. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the 'Hindu' dated 1st July, 1997 regarding India-Poland working on tank upgrade project; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard, and

by when the work on the proposed project is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) To equip the T-72 tanks available with Indian Army with modern features, development of an upgradation package was undertaken by DRDO which has since been completed. Under this programme some of the hardware was purchased from Poland. Action to productionise upgraded tanks has been initiated.

Unsatisfactory performance of sea-eagle missiles

42. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the performance of the sea-eagle missiles purchsed for the Navy has been found to be unsatisfactory;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any enquiry has been made to fix responsibility for purchasing sub-standard missiles?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (c) The Sea Eagle-Missiles were acquired by the Navy in 1987-88 from British Aerospace, U.K. Prior to induction from UK, the capabilities of the Sea Eagle missiles (SEMs) were fully demonstrated during live firings from Sea Harrier Aircraft and, therefor, it is not correct to term the missiles as sub-standard. Recently in April, 1997, Navy carried out two practice firings and in both the cases some malfunctionings were noticed. Immediate measures have been initiated to identify the specific nature of the problem so as to rectify them and ensure the serviceability of the remaining missiles in stock.

Failure in enforcing warranty clause for servicing of missiles

43. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the IAF failed to enforce the warranty clause resulting in eleven missiles valued at Rs. 1.38 crores remaining unserviceable for the last 2—4 years during which 25—50% of its shelf has already gone; and

(b) if so, the reasons for this lapse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Autonomy to Armed Forces Medical College, Pune

44. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune is seeking autonomy;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and advantages likely to accrue to the college on attaining autonomy; and

(c) the action taken on their demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) In view of (a) above Questions do not arise.

अपर्याप्त रक्षा बजट आवंटन

45. **प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या थल सेनाध्यक्ष श्री शंकरराय चौधरी ने प्रधानमंत्री को पत्र लिखकर रक्षा बजट आवंटनों को अपर्याप्त बताया है;

(ख) क्या बजट आवंटन अपर्याप्त होने के कारण भारत की सुरक्षा खतरे में है; और